

# Arsenal Plays Vital Role in Food Output

Production of nitrate fertilizers at the Joliet arsenal, under a \$40,000,000 program to increase world wheat production by 10,000,000 bushels yearly and stave off starvation in war-weary lands abroad, makes chemicals the second largest non-transportation industry employer in Joliet.

When the arsenal is at peak operation, it contributes nearly 1,600 to the total of 2,400 workers employer in the Joliet chemical industry. At present, because of curtailed demand on some ammunition projects, employment is stabilized around the 1,000 figure at the arsenal.

**ONE OPERATION** of the nitrogen fertilizer production assignment given the Army's Ordnance Department is carried out here. This is the conversion of anhydrous ammonia into nitric acid.

ably once it reached the city limits of Joliet.

On that occasion, the engineer was W. Stone, while P. Keenan was the fireman and the train was in charge of Conductor H. A. Milligan.

The acid, neutralized with a balance of ammonia to effect a water solution of ammonium nitrate, is shipped in tank cars to the Savannah Ordnance Depot to be evaporated and "grained," or flaked into nitrogen fertilizer. There it is conditioned and bagged for shipment.

Production started at the Joliet Arsenal, which had turned out TNT and thousands of tons of shells and bombs during wartime, last October, and is scheduled for completion about October, 1947. Production of the fertilizer is expected to reach a peak of 88,000 short tons a month by next March.

**JOLIET ARSENAL** is one of the 15 former ammunition plants engaged in the manufacture of the nitrate fertilizer under the emergency program, designed to provide grain to feed an estimated 20,000,000 persons.

Eight of the 15 plants are engaged in manufacturing the raw material, while the remaining seven carry on graining operations necessary to the finished products.

Plants making the raw material, anhydrous ammonia, include the Mississippi Ordnance Works,

Louisiana, Mo.; the Morgantown Ordnance Works, in West Virginia; and the Ohio Ordnance Works, Henderson, Ky.

**OTHER UNITS** carrying on the same "in-between" step as the Joliet Arsenal—the conversion of the anhydrous ammonia into nitric acid—are the Indiana Arsenal, Charlestown, Ind.; the Sunflower Ordnance Works, Lawrence, Kans.; Holston Ordnance Works, Kingsport, Tenn.; and Radford Arsenal, Radford, Va.

Since war's end, Joliet Arsenal has been kept on a stand-by basis following discontinuing of ammunition production. Employment has fluctuated, depending on the number and type of missions given to the Arsenal.

**SUPERVISING** the peacetime emergency fertilizer production program are seven officers of the Ordnance Department. Commanding the Arsenal is Col. Carroll D. Hudson.

Headquarters of the Field Director of Ammunition plants also is maintained at the Arsenal. The director at present is Col. Noel Holmes, who supervises activities at other ammunition plants under jurisdiction of the Joliet Arsenal office.